

UPDATE ON RACE TO THE TOP

NOVEMBER 2011

INTRODUCTION: RACE TO THE TOP

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) made \$4 billion in grants available for school improvement. Of that, Georgia was awarded \$400,000,000 over 4 years to implement its Race to the Top (RT3) plan. Half of the money will stay at the state level, and half will go to the 26 participating local educational agencies (LEAs) or school districts, including APS. Georgia's fiscal year budget for the 2011-2012 school year includes \$140,709,507 in ARRA funds. APS was awarded \$40 million of the \$400 million and will receive \$10 million each year. RT3 will be used to support every school in the APS district.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Georgia's RT3 Proposal

In Georgia's RT3 Application (6/1/10), Georgia outlined a plan to adopt common core standards (CCS) and develop and implement common, high quality assessments. Georgia proposed to adopt common standards by August 2010 and to begin implementation of those standards in the fall of the 2011-12 school year. Steps for implementation include (1) aligning current standards (GPS) with the new standards; (2) developing curriculum materials and classroom resources; (3) evaluating, organizing and improving existing resources at www.georgiastandards.org to ensure frameworks, formative assessment items and core units are in place and educators and public know of them; (4) developing and requiring training for educators on delivery of standards and use of assessment data; and (5) building capacity of LEAs to ensure CCS implementation. Further Georgia seeks to establish a consortium to develop assessments and welcomes opportunities to work with national or regional assessment consortiums on this. In the interim, Georgia plans to use current assessments because of the close alignment between current GPS and CCS.

For transition to CCS and new assessments, Georgia proposed to (1) develop and provide instructional materials and resources; (2) provide targeted, content-specific development on CCS and assessment to 4 teachers per school; (3) train school leaders on CCS at Summer Leadership Academies; and (4) alter high school exit requirements to include college and career-ready requirements.

Progress Made

Georgia joined 42 other states to develop the internationally benchmarked Common Core State Standards or CCSS. Educators have begun merging the current GPS curriculum with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to produce CCGPS (Georgia's name for the CCSS). Georgia will fully implement the CCGPS in the 2012-13 school year. The standards are already closely aligned. An assessment tool provided by national organization Achieve determined that GPS math curriculum is 90% aligned with CCSS math and GPS English language arts is 81% aligned with CCSS English language arts.

The state has hosted telecasts on GPB TV to provide an overview of the program and will continue with follow up broadcasts specific to subject and grade from January 25, 2012, through May 9, 2012. Archives of these broadcasts will be available at www.gpb.org/education/common-core. RT3 funds will enable the state to provide training to teachers through Regional Meetings; develop formative and benchmark assessments to provide feedback to teachers throughout the school year, and to create proficiency based pathways for students to advance based upon mastery of subject material. Georgia has applied for additional RT3 funds as a member of an assessment consortium to create a common assessment aligned to the CCSS to measure “college and career readiness” to be available in all states in 2014-15.

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS – EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES

Georgia’s RT3 Proposal

At the heart of Georgia’s RT3 application is its plan to create new evaluation instruments to improve and reward effectiveness of teachers and leaders. Effectiveness will be determined largely by student progress. The state will contract with a provider to create value-added models (VAMs) to calculate the effect of the teacher (as well as leader, district, and teacher and leader preparation programs) on student growth. VAMs are a “collection of complex statistical techniques that use multiple years of students’ test score data to estimate the effects of individual schools/teachers on student learning.” The new evaluation tools will tie student growth to compensation, employment, and certification decisions.

Each teacher will be assigned a Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) consisting of four components:

(1) a qualitative, rubric-based evaluation measurement based on multiple ratings categories, similar to CLASS Keys, based on multiple inputs, such as classroom observation, walk throughs, lesson plans and portfolios [30% of TEM for core teachers; 60% for non-core];

(2) Value-added score measuring teacher’s effect on student, based on CRCT and including at least 3 years of prior test scores, with effective meaning a gain of one grade level per year and highly effective meaning a gain of 1.5 grade levels. [50% for core teachers; 30% for non-core; Georgia will develop assessment for non-core subjects].

(3) Reduction of student achievement gap at classroom level [10% of TEM], measured as the difference in achievement between any student subgroup in the class and the highest performing subgroup in Georgia.

(4) Other quantitative measures to include [10% TEM for core; 40% TEM non-core] teacher-focused surveys.

Leaders will be evaluated uses similar Leader Effectiveness Measures (LEMs), which measure the effect of the leaders on student growth in the school. Districts will have DEMs based on student growth

within the district. Teacher Preparation Programs will have TPPEMs and Leader Preparation Program will have LPPEMs, all will evaluate effectiveness based largely on student progress.

The annual teacher/principal evaluations will be timely, meaningful and constructive. LEAs will conduct face-to-face evaluation, providing constructive feedback and sharing all relevant underlying data with teachers and leaders. Georgia and LEAs will develop a survey tool to enable teachers and principals to provide feedback about the evaluation process and will use this information to modify the process, as needed. The state (OESI) will train evaluators and in larger districts train key office personnel, such as HR, on the evaluation process. The evaluation system will be piloted with the 26 RT3 LEAs in 2010-11 school year and implemented statewide in 2011-12. The state will develop and disseminate district, school, and teacher level value-added reports and will implement and support continuous evaluation and feedback mechanism.

TEMs/LEMs will inform talent development, compensation and contract renewal. A portion of teacher/leader compensation will be based on student performance so that effective teachers can make more money. Total compensation will be made up of a baseline salary plus performance-based bonuses. Step increases will be tied to performance. New teachers will be given a 3 year, non-renewable "Induction Certificate." Teachers must meet certain standards for renewal, i.e., to advance to a Career Teacher Certificate, which itself must be renewed every 5 years based on satisfaction of Professional Learning Units (PLUs) and a threshold TEM.

TEMs/LEMs will help ensure equitable distribution of teachers/principals to high poverty and high minority schools. Effective teachers/principals can be given bonuses to stay in these schools and to move to these schools.

Progress Made

The Evaluation Steering Committee, the Steering Committee on Student Growth, and the Other Measures Steering Committee have done much of the work in developing the new evaluation systems. See the GaDOE website at <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/RT3.aspx> for a list of committee members. The Evaluation Steering Committee is now integrating the components of the teacher and leader evaluation systems to create a comprehensive, aligned evaluation system. They have developed a cleaner organization of the various components and adopted better terminology. These evaluation systems are consolidated with all pieces aligned and consistent within and across systems. The components described above have not changed but have been reorganized into the following evaluation SYSTEMS:

Teacher Keys Evaluation System (generates a TEM score)

- Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (the new name for restructured CLASS Keys)
 - Consists of the following 5 domains, with 2 standards each. The target will be "proficient." There will be a rubric for each standard, with supporting documentation that will include specific behaviors and practices to assist observers in assessing.
 - Planning
 - Professional knowledge

- Instructional planning
 - Learning Environment
 - Positive learning environment
 - Academically challenging environment
 - Instructional Delivery
 - Instructional strategies
 - Differentiated instruction
 - Assessment of and for Learning
 - Assessment strategies
 - Assessment uses
 - Professionalism and Communication
 - Professionalism
 - Communication
- Surveys Instructional Practice (student surveys)
 - Final versions of surveys are being developed and aligned to the Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards
 - Surveys will be integrated with evaluation handbooks, training and supporting materials. Electronic survey tools are in development, and administration will be streamlined to minimize the time commitment required.
- Student achievement and growth
 - For tested subjects = value added student growth percentile. Georgia’s non-negotiable elements and outcomes have been established. The Steering Committee on Student Growth determined that the CRCT, CRCT-M (if possible), and EOCT will be included in whatever model is selected by Georgia. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been established to provide technical expertise to decide on specific model and methodology.
 - For non tested subjects = will be assessed using DOE approved measures. District-level student learning objectives and other measures will be used for non-tested grades and subjects. DOE is currently working with districts to determine what they already have in place. This will be developed at the district level, approved by GaDOE. Existing assessments may be used whenever appropriate. Training and support will be provided by GaDOE.

Leader Keys Evaluation System (generates LEM score)

- Leader Assessment on Performance Standards (new name for restructured Leader Keys)
 - Consists of the following 4 domains with 2 standards each. The target will be “proficient.” A rubric will be provided for each standard along with supporting information. In the pilot, only building principals will be included. Ultimately, building principals and assistance principals will be evaluated under this system.
 - School Leadership
 - Instructional leadership
 - School climate

- Human Resources Leadership
 - Human resources management
 - Teacher/staff evaluation
 - Organizational Leadership
 - Planning and assessment
 - Organizational management
 - Professionalism and Communication
 - Professionalism
 - Communications and community relations
- Governance and Leadership
 - Climate surveys
 - Final versions of climate surveys are being developed and aligned to the Leader Assessment on Performance Standards
 - Surveys will be integrated with evaluation handbooks, training and supporting materials. Electronic survey tools are in development, and administration will be streamlined to minimize the time commitment required.
 - Student attendance
 - Retention of effective teachers
- Student Achievement and Growth

Student Growth will account for 50% of both the LEM and TEM scores. The Steering Committee on Student Growth has stated that the purpose of using a student growth model within a comprehensive evaluation system is to accurately and fairly capture a teacher's effect on student learning throughout the course of an academic year. The goal of the committee is to identify Georgia's specific priorities regarding student growth measurements to determine which model(s) best match those priorities. The focus of the committee is to identify the state's priorities and needs for growth/value added model; to analyze how these priorities and needs align with the student assessment program; and to examine different growth/value added models to evaluate the best fit for Georgia. To date, the committee has developed and refined a Theory of Action, focusing on prioritized growth model outcomes. The committee has determined that the CRCT, CRCT-M (if possible), and EOCT will be included in the model selected by Georgia. The committee is researching the experience of others that have used value-added and normative growth models.

Parent Surveys and Peer Review and Assistance: In June, the Other Measures Steering Committee found a lack of research on the inclusion of parent surveys in formal teacher evaluation; therefore, the committee discussed moving forward on a volunteer basis to research inclusion of parent surveys. The committee also considered the role of parent surveys in LEMs and the role of peers (peer surveys and peer assistance and review) in teacher evaluations. The committee determined the cost of peer assistance and review makes it prohibitive to undertake for statewide teacher evaluations, but that, given its strengths in coaching/mentoring and induction-type programs, the Professional Standards Commission should examine it as a possibility to fit within the Master Teacher and Teacher Leader

career ladder initiatives. The committee also discussed potential duties and responsibilities of Master Teachers and Teacher Leaders.

Training: The RT3 districts are now ready to begin the pilot and had a meeting 9/14/2011 to discuss pilot in more detail. Training for DOE field specialists and district system trainers was to take place in October. Training will include all components of the evaluation systems as will the pilot. Training for 26 RT3 districts on the teacher evaluation system is being provided from Oct – Dec 2011. Training for RT3 districts on the leader evaluation systems will take place regionally in early Jan 2012. An electronic platform for data collection is in development.

The Pilot: The new evaluation system will be piloted in the 26 RT3 districts from Jan – May 2012. Sixteen districts elected to pilot with select teachers in every school. Ten districts will pilot with all teachers in select schools. At the end of the 2011-12 school year, a reliability and validity study will be completed for the restructured version of the CLASS and Leader Keys and the complete evaluation system. In the 2012-13 school year, the restructured, validated evaluation system will be used by the 26 RT3 districts as well as offered to other districts. Up to 60 districts each year may choose to implement the new system from 2012-13 forward.

SUPPLY OF TEACHERS AND LEADERS

Georgia's RT3 Proposal

Georgia uses available data to identify and respond to teacher shortages and is working with colleges/universities, LEAs and Alliance partnerships to respond to these shortages, including in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and ESOL. The state is working on improving data longitudinal studies (SLDS) and use of data to improve instruction. When the state's new SLDS is available, Georgia will be able to use SLDS to track teacher candidates earlier and to track teachers in the workforce.

Avenues by which Georgia will increase the supply of teachers include Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, and UTeach. Georgia will also establish Grow Your Own Teacher (GYOT) competitive grant programs for rural districts supported by the Innovation Fund (described below).

Georgia will improve the capacity of current teachers/principals through targeted talent development, including a STEM partnership with CEISMC of Ga Tech. For principals, Georgia will provide Summer Leadership Academies and coaches and mentors to principals of the lowest achieving schools. While Georgia currently has alternative routes to teacher certification (including 5 paths and 27 programs), it has only one alternative route for leader certification (the Permit); therefore, it will create new route. The state will also provide School Administration Managers (SAM) to the lowest achieving schools so the principals can focus on instruction. Professional Learning Units (PLUs) will be aligned with weaknesses in TEMs/LEMs. Certification rules will be changed to require GACE (GA Assessments for Cert of Educators) for all. The state will also use TTPEM/LLPEM information to improve teacher and leader preparation programs.

Progress Made

With regard to the state's new SLDS, RT3 funds are being used to design and implement a P-20 data system to link education information across state agencies. The Governor's Office of Student Achievement and other agency partners hired Kriste Elia as P-20 LSD Director. She has a PhD from Georgia Tech in Geographic Information Systems and has led and managed multimillion dollar tech projects at Georgia Technology Authority, GeoFields, and Parsons Engineering Science.

Contracts with the following were approved on 4/13/11:

- Teach for America will focus on some of Metro Atlanta's RT3 districts, including APS. Teach for America will work with PSC to become an official GaTAPP provider in 2012.
- The New Teacher Project will focus on rural RT3 districts. Then on 7/14/11, PSC approved TNTP as an official teacher certification provider through Ga TAPP Educator Preparation Program. So teachers can get certification through their work with TNTP in lowest achieving schools.
- The College Board will provide administration, scoring, reporting PSAT for all 10th graders
- The University of Texas at Austin will provide training and materials related to Fourth Mathematics Course Option entitled CCGPS Advanced Mathematical Decision Making
- 17 LEAs representing "lowest achieving schools" will participate in 2011 Summer Leadership Academies.

See also STEM and Innovation Fund, below.

STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATHEMATICS)

Georgia's RT3 Proposal

To increase focus on STEM, Georgia plans to require all elementary and middle schools to make Science their 2nd AYP indicator and will provide professional development support to LEAs. The state included in its RT3 plans activities focusing on STEM, including raising educator awareness of STEM resources, developing/disseminating applied STEM Modules to promote problem based inquire approach to STEM, and initiating STEM applied learning partnerships.

Progress Made

See Innovation Fund below.

INNOVATION FUND

Georgia's Innovation Fund (19.4 Million grant program) was announced in April 2011. The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget will award grants to promote partnerships between LEAs, institutions of higher learning, businesses and non-profits "that develop or implement innovative and high-impact programs aimed at producing positive outcomes for students," focusing on proposals that will (1) raise student achievement by developing applied learning opportunities in STEM, (2) improving teacher effectiveness through programs to support new teachers, (3) increasing pipeline of effective

teachers through Grow Your Own Teacher programs in rural regions, especially in high-need subjects, and/or (4) developing/expanding charter schools focused on STEM. Governor Nathan Deal announced the first round of winners of Innovation Fund Grants [from Sept. 2011 RT3 newsletter]:

- Drew Charter School Partners of Innovation – partnership between GSU, GA Tech, and Drew Charter School to create STEAM (Science, Tech, Engineering, Arts and Math) schools.
- Teach for Georgia – to recruit Ga Tech STEM majors to teach in rural Georgia.
- 21st Century STEM Collaborations: Applications of the Direct to Discovery Model – collaboration between Barrow County Schools and Ga Tech to integrate the Direct to Discovery model into GPS.
- The KIPP Teacher Fellows Program – will train GSU and Mercer College of Education grads and deploy them into metro Atlanta schools where they are most needed
- The Regional Charter STEM Academy – create tri-county (White, Hall, Lumpkin counties) STEM charter school

The second round of Innovation Fund applications are being accepted this fall.

RT3 MONITORING

GaDOE will do the following RT3 monitoring:

- Expenditures – LEA sub-recipients submit Scope of Work and annual budget before funds can be expended
- Project Management – two RT3 project managers and two budget analysts will monitor execution of projects in GA's Scope of Work and state agencies implementing RT3
- Onsite – GaDOE onsite Cross-Functional Monitoring Team will visit LEA sub-recipients
- A highly effective State Director is assigned to each lowest achieving school